

achievement. This research resulted in specific changes intended to improve the achievement of all children, including a full-day kindergarten program, hiring an additional English language learner teacher, and adding three reading intervention teachers. In addition, more teachers were hired to reduce class sizes in grades K–3.

Another component of the success of all of Mankato's schools is the tremendous support from the community. Last fall, Mankato-area voters approved two referenda: to provide \$6 million to update many existing buildings throughout the district and to provide \$3.5 million over 7 years to update the schools' technology. In 2002, voters approved a \$2.5 million per year operating referendum.

Much of the credit for Kennedy Elementary School's success belongs to its principal, Greg Stoffel, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Kennedy Elementary School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Kennedy Elementary School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Kennedy Elementary School in Mankato for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### RECOGNIZING WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MANKATO, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Washington Elementary School, in Mankato, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Washington Elementary School is truly a model of educational success. The school is one of 9 elementary schools in Mankato and serves 380 pupils, including a large number of children of diverse backgrounds, and many who settled in Mankato upon arriving from other countries. Thirteen percent of Washington children are English language learners, and 40 percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

The large percentages of English language learners and children from low-income families present a significant challenge to the school; and although Washington Elementary has never failed to make adequate yearly progress relative to the requirements of No Child Left Behind, that success has required a constant focus on academic achievement.

The staff at Washington Elementary consistently strive to make classroom learning more meaningful by finding connections with all other aspects of the children's daily lives. Teachers also

demonstrate their belief that the children can and will succeed; they then take time to celebrate their pupils' successes.

At a monthly celebration assembly, a feature of the continuing focus on acknowledging successes, children are publicly recognized for curricular and noncurricular attainments, which can involve such areas as most improved, citizenship, and academic achievement. At each assembly, every teacher recognizes three pupils, who receive student-of-the-month ribbons. Their names are also posted in the school's front lobby. It is a goal that, by the end of the year, every child will have been recognized for some accomplishment. This recognition builds self-esteem, promotes a sense of individual responsibility, and effectively motivates pupils to work hard academically.

Another component of the success of all of Mankato's schools is the tremendous support from the community. Last fall, Mankato-area voters approved two referenda: to provide \$6 million to update many existing buildings throughout the district, and to provide \$3.5 million over 7 years to update the schools' technology. In 2002, voters approved a \$2.5 million per year operating referendum.

Much of the credit for Washington Elementary School's success belongs to its principal, Judi Brandon, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Washington Elementary School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Washington Elementary School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Washington Elementary School in Mankato for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### RECOGNIZING THE BREN ROAD EDUCATION CENTER, MINNETONKA, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor the Bren Road Education Center, in Minnetonka, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Bren Road Education Center is truly a model of educational success. The center serves high school students, who often present the greatest challenges for educators. Those enrolled at Bren Road have been referred by their school districts and come with behavioral problems, unsuccessful social interactions, and, in some cases, neurobiological disorders and developmental delays. Nearly all students have significant special education needs in the areas of emotional and be-

havior functioning. Many have substance abuse and/or mental health illnesses or a history of involvement with the juvenile courts. All the teachers and staff at the Bren Road Education Center approach these tremendous challenges with the assumption that their students will succeed.

The Bren Road Education Center opened its doors in September, 2005, with a true sense of excitement and promise. One observer said, "There was a sense of relief that the students at the Bren Road Education Center would now have a new chance, an opportunity for success, and a bright future!"

The staff at Bren Road consider each student to be unique, and they work tirelessly to build relationships with the students by engaging them respectfully. The philosophy at Bren Road is that these young people have often struggled unsuccessfully in traditional, large high schools, because their particular needs had gone unrecognized. Given the right environment, appropriate support, positive relationships with adults, and opportunities to give and receive respect, they can do well in an academic setting.

Bren Road's individualized instruction in reading, writing, and math prepares students to pass State-level proficiency tests. Experimental learning labs including science, art, and independent living labs afford students hands-on learning and vocational experiences. One student was repeatedly suspended from his regular high school, because he could not control his anger. At Bren Road, however, he has developed his interest in woodworking and takes pride in making Adirondack furniture.

Much of the credit for the Bren Road Education Center's success belongs to its supervisor, Jan Joslin, and the dedicated teachers and staff. The students and staff at the Bren Road Education Center understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at the Bren Road Education Center should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Bren Road Education Center in Minnetonka for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### RECOGNIZING THE EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT, EDEN PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor the Eden Prairie School District, in Eden Prairie, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Eden Prairie School District is truly a model of educational success.

The district takes a systemwide approach to ending a subtle form of racism that can plague schools and other institutions.

Some schools use an approach to teaching that has a bias—an approach that benefits white students and puts black students at a disadvantage. Eden Prairie Schools Superintendent Dr. Melissa Krull, believes the district has made progress toward a solution.

The 2005 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, MCA, results for Eden Prairie were impressive: All schools showed dramatic improvements. However, the district found that its Black students were not realizing the same level of success as other students.

Eden Prairie found that even excluding factors such as poverty, learning disabilities, and English as a second language, the district's Black students were still not doing as well as White students, who earned approximately 22 to 25 percentage points more than Black students on the MCAs.

Eden Prairie Schools have made a great commitment of time and resources to eliminating the achievement gap. Eden Prairie administrators base their response on research and data, breaking down test results by racial groups, then determining which schools, classrooms, and students need that extra attention.

The district created a program, at one elementary school, called "The Mom's Club," inviting single mothers to visit and talk with staff and other single mothers while their sons interact with male high school students to establish friendships. Through the district's Somali Liaison Program, a Somali staff member visits new Somali families to answer questions about the schools and show families how to get involved. As part of a Homework Zone Initiative, staff members go to apartment complexes with diverse families and offer free, afterschool tutoring.

Much of the credit for the Eden Prairie School District's success belongs to its superintendent, Dr. Melissa Krull, the dedicated principals, teachers, and other staff. The students and staff within the district understand that, in order to be successful, a district must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where all students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at the Eden Prairie School District should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Eden Prairie School District in Eden Prairie for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### RECOGNIZING THE ARTS HIGH SCHOOL—PERPICH CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION—GOLDEN VALLEY, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor the Arts High School at the

Perpich Center for Arts Education, in Golden Valley, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Arts High School is truly a model of educational success. The school is a residential, tuition-free, public high school delivering a comprehensive education for eleventh- and twelfth-grade students motivated to focus their studies on the arts. Enrollment is limited to 310 students, affording a relatively small learning environment while allowing students from every part of Minnesota to take advantage of the wonderful arts resources in the Twin Cities. Dedicated and caring staff members furnish 24-hour supervision and coordinate many special activities for dormitory residents. Its 16-year history has demonstrated that the Arts High School is a highly effective means of promoting student achievement and artistic attainment.

In their morning classes, Arts High students study math, science, world languages, English, and social studies. In the afternoon, they delve deeply into their arts area studies; students can concentrate on dance, literary arts, media arts, music, theater, or visual arts. Over the past 5 years, the Arts High has had 9 National Merit Scholarship Finalists, 6 Semifinalists, and 18 Commended Students.

Testimonials from the Arts High School's graduates convey their appreciation of the school's merits. Ashley Wilkinson, class of 2004, says, "My experiences at the Arts High School have given me the confidence to approach any situation and succeed. The extra confidence has made me stronger and prepared me for the world." Brian McManamon, class of 1993, who is an MFA candidate at the Yale School of Drama, says, "As a student, I found myself continually interested in challenging myself and experiencing not just acting, but taking a risk once in a while and doing something I was not familiar with. I wouldn't be where I am today, if I hadn't gone to the Arts High School."

Much of the credit for the Arts High School's success belongs to its Director, Rie Gilsdorf, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at the Arts High School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at the Arts High School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Arts High School in Golden Valley for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### RECOGNIZING MANKATO EAST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, MANKATO, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Mankato East Junior High School, in Mankato, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Mankato East Junior High School is truly a model of educational success. The school has formed a partnership with the Greater Mankato Diversity Council to augment the community's commitment to creating an environment of inclusiveness. Mankato East Junior High offers the council's prejudice reduction workshops to the seventh and eighth grades. The curriculum's core value is respect.

The seventh grade curriculum at Mankato East Junior High focuses on "Global Awareness/World Mindedness: If the World Were a Village." This workshop identifies inequities in the distribution of resources among the world's people, and it encourages dialogue about how students can contribute to finding a solution to the problem.

The eighth grade workshop, "Vive la Difference," gives students an opportunity to participate in an activity to learn about the feelings and behaviors accompanying inclusion and exclusion.

Mankato East Junior High School also supports P.E.A.C.E. People Experiencing and Accepting Cultures Everywhere. Approximately 50 of the school's 465 seventh and eighth graders participate in the PEACE project, helping them find new ways to increase cultural awareness, promote acceptance among all students, speak out against violence and racism, teach tolerance, lead by positive example, serve the community through special projects, improve self-esteem, and support others.

As part of its efforts to increase awareness and appreciation of other cultures, Mankato East Junior High invites the Mixed Blood Theater to perform for the entire student body. This year's presentation, the "Black Eagle," tells the story of Dr. Ronald McNair, the African-American scientist who was aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986.

Another component of the success of all of Mankato's schools is the tremendous support from the community. Last fall, Mankato-area voters approved two referenda: to provide \$6 million to update many existing buildings throughout the district and to provide \$3.5 million over 7 years to update the schools' technology. In 2002, voters approved a \$2.5 million per year operating referendum.

Much of the credit for Mankato East Junior High School's success belongs to its principal, Rich Dahman, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Mankato East Junior High School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond